

# Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Terry Goddard Announces Disabilities Settlement with College**

(Phoenix, Ariz. – March 14, 2008) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced a \$25,000 Civil Rights settlement with the Pima County Community College, resolving a lawsuit alleging that the college violated the Arizonans with Disabilities Act (AzDA) by refusing to provide a deaf student with sign language interpreters with whom she could effectively communicate.

In November 2006, the Civil Rights Division of the Attorney General's Office filed the lawsuit after an investigation found reasonable cause that the college violated the AzDA. As part of the settlement, the Attorney General's Office obtained payment of \$25,000 for Stacy Duvall, the student who had been denied a sign language interpreter with whom she could communicate. The settlement does not constitute an admission of wrongdoing.

Under the settlement, the District also agreed to:

- Replace sign language interpreters who are unable to effectively communicate in the necessary sign language, signing system or other modes of communication.
- Double the number of vendor agencies and increase the qualified independent interpreters with whom it contracts.
- Increase the rates paid to independently retained sign language interpreters. Interpreters will be paid between \$20 per hour to \$44 per hour, depending on qualifications.
- Adopt and follow revised written policies that will help staff and students understand their rights and responsibilities with respect to disabled student resources.
- Implement training for Disabled Student Resource (DSR) employees and those involved in providing DSR services to students.
- Use only licensed, qualified sign language interpreters that are able to interpret effectively, accurately and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

Assistant Attorney General Sandra Kane represented the state in the lawsuit.

The Arizonans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination in places of public accommodation based on a person's disability. Any person who believes that his or her civil rights have been violated should call the Arizona Attorney General's Office Civil Rights Division toll-free statewide at 1-877-491-5742 or toll-free TDD at 1-877-624-8090.

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